

Register results

The following actions have been taken by Federal agencies. They have been previously summarized in CONSUMER NEWS or CONSUMER REGISTER as proposals. Extent of consumer comment is indicated when such information is available.

- **Office of Education (OE)** has issued final regulations for funding consumer education program, effective July 2. Details—*Federal Register*: May 24, page 21191; Nov. 26, 1975, page 54805. CONSUMER NEWS: Dec. 15, 1975.
- **Federal Reserve System (FRS)** has adopted regulations to implement the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975 which requires mortgage lenders to disclose where mortgage money goes by geographic areas. Purpose is to eliminate alleged practice known as "redlining." Effective date was June 28, but first mortgage loan statement required will not be due until Sept. 30. Details—*Federal Register*: June 14, page 23931; March 31, page 13619. CONSUMER REGISTER: April 15.
- Effective June 30, **Housing & Urban Development Dept. (HUD)** adopted rules to implement the completely revised Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA), including amendments. HUD received over 240 comments on the proposal & met with industry & consumer groups during the comment period. Most commenters accepted the proposed RESPA requirements & made numerous constructive comments. A few recommended outright repeal of RESPA & said provisions would not help consumers but would create unnecessary work for lenders & additional costs to consumers. Details—*Federal Register*: June 4, page 22702; March 29, page 13032; Jan. 9, page 1692. CONSUMER REGISTER: April 15; CONSUMER NEWS & CONSUMER REGISTER: Aug. 1, 1975.
- **Housing & Urban Development Dept. (HUD)** has now published a revised information booklet on real estate settlement costs. [See this issue of CONSUMER NEWS for highlights of the RESPA booklet.] Details—*Federal Register*: June 10, page 23620. Complaints may be sent either to the lending agency or directly to Assistant Secretary for Consumer Affairs & Regulatory Functions, Housing & Urban Development Dept., Washington, DC 20410.
- **Agriculture Dept.** has clarified its rules on the sanitary transportation of meat & poultry in interstate commerce & within some states. Agriculture received 22 comments on the proposal. Of the 6 commenters who favored the proposal, 4 came from consumers "who saw it as a positive step toward further assuring that consumers receive only wholesome food." Regulation becomes effective Sept. 9. Details—*Federal Register*: June 11, page 23699; Sept. 28, 1973, page 27069. CONSUMER REGISTER: Oct. 15, 1973.
- **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** has amended its school bus emergency exit requirements to permit the use of rear window & side door emergency exits in certain cases. Effective date is Oct. 26. Details—*Federal Register*: June 3, page 22356; Jan 27, page 3871. CONSUMER REGISTER: Feb. 15.

Used cars (continued)

Although the exact deadline has not been set, comments on **Federal Trade Commission's (FTC)** proposed rule on used cars will be accepted at least until July 31. (CONSUMER REGISTER: Feb. 1 reported an original deadline of March 23 for comments.)

FTC has added the following questions to its proposal. They are:

- Should used car dealers be required to disclose known defects?
- Should used car dealers be required to make certain disclosures in dealer-to-dealer transactions?
- Should used car dealers be required to include Vehicle Identification Numbers as part of the required information?

FTC has prepared a questionnaire for the use of consumers who have had experiences in buying used cars from dealers. For a complete copy of the questionnaire, write to "Used Cars," Room 288, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580.

Details—*Federal Register*: May 21, page 20896; Jan. 6, page 1976. CONSUMER NEWS: Jan. 15. CONSUMER REGISTER: Feb. 1. Send comments to Special Assistant Director for Rulemaking, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580.

Meetings, etc.

• **AIR BAGS**—On Aug. 3, **Transportation Dept. (DOT)** will hold a hearing to find out how the public feels about air bags. Anyone interested in testifying at the hearing should write—by July 12—to:

FMVSS 208 Testimony
Executive Secretary, Room 10203
Transportation Dept.
400 7th St., SW
Washington, DC 20590

Participants will be allowed a maximum of 10 minutes each. In addition, interested persons may attend the hearing as observers without an appointment. Hearing will be held at Departmental Auditorium, Constitution Ave. between 12th & 14th St., NW, Washington, DC. The hours are 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. & 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 14, page 24070.

• **FEDERAL REGISTER BRIEFINGS—Office of the Federal Register** announces weekly Wednesday briefings on how to use the Federal Register. Briefings begin July 7 at 9 a.m. at the following address:

Federal Register Conference Room
Room 9409
1100 L St., NW
Washington, DC

Reservations are required & can be made by calling Bill Short on 202-523-5382.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 8, page 22997; Dec. 19, 1975, page 58898. CONSUMER REGISTER: Jan. 1.

False IDs

July 7 is deadline for comments on **Justice Dept's.** request for information on the recommendations of the Federal Advisory Committee on False Identification (FACFI). The report, which will be issued later in the summer, will include an analysis of Federal & state legislation that deals with false identification, proposed guidelines to help states control access to vital statistics records, program for matching birth & death certificates & program to improve security of state driver's licenses.

FACFI was established in 1974 to study the extent of crim-

inal use of false IDs. The report details how easily false IDs can be obtained; for example, a criminal can obtain a birth certificate of a person who was born about the same time he was but who died in early childhood. He can find the date & place of birth from old newspapers or local birth records & then write for a copy of the certificate.

Drug smuggling, illegal immigration, escaping of prisoners, frauds against business & government & other criminal activity are aided by false IDs.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 16, page 24431. Send comments to David J. Muchow, Chairman, Federal Advisory Committee on False Identification, Justice Dept., Washington, DC 20530; telephone: 202-739-2745.

Vinyl chloride

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recommended procedures for the disposal of aerosol cans that contain vinyl chloride, either as a propellant or as an ingredient. This action is designed largely to help companies which, under a **Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)** rule, were required to repurchase household products containing vinyl chloride & now have large quantities of these products on hand.

CPSC ruled that any self-pressurized household products containing vinyl chloride were banned hazardous substances & set up certain repurchase requirements for manufacturers to follow. These repurchase requirements, however, have led to questions over the disposal of vinyl chloride products, once in the manufacturer's possession. To answer these questions, EPA has recommended burning & burial as 2 methods of disposal & gives suggestions about how these can be accomplished safely.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 9, page 23226.

Standards

• **ITALIAN CHEESES**—July 17 is deadline for comments on **Food & Drug Administration's (FDA)** proposal to amend standards of identity for certain Italian cheeses, such as provolone & mozzarella, to permit the addition of antimycotic (mold-retarding) substances during the manufacturing process. Proposal is a result of a petition filed by National Cheese Institute because mold growth on packaged cheese "represents an economic loss & a potential health hazard to the consumer." Details—*Federal Register*: May 20, page 20690. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Food & Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

Endangered plants

Aug. 16 is deadline for comments on **Interior Dept.'s. Fish & Wildlife Service's (FWS)** proposal to list as endangered 1700 kinds of U.S. plants.

This is the first time that FWS has proposed to do something to prevent certain plants from becoming extinct (as authorized in a section of the Endangered Species Act of 1973). There have been many Federal laws to protect animals, fish & birds, beginning with the Lacey Act in 1900 & extending to the Endangered Species Act of 1973—which included plants. Interior says plant habitats are continuously being destroyed by suburban development, road construction, flooding, irrigation,

strip mining, fire & swamp drainage. In addition, commercial & private plant collectors have threatened certain species of plants. Pollution & disease have also been factors.

The proposal, if adopted, would prohibit shipping the listed plants in interstate commerce, & Federal agencies could not fund projects that jeopardize the species. However, unlike laws protecting animals, private collectors would be allowed to take endangered species from the regions for their own use as long as state laws are not violated.

For a list of the endangered plants & where they are normally found, see the June 15 *Federal Register*.

Public hearings on the proposal will be scheduled at a later date.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 16, page 24524. Send comments to Director (FWS/LE), Fish & Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 19183, Washington, DC 20036.

[NOTE: For a free copy of *Facts About Federal Wildlife Laws*, write to Director, Fish & Wildlife Service, Washington, DC 20240.]

Air bags

Sept. 17 is deadline for comments on **Transportation Dept.'s (DOT)** proposal to extend until Aug. 31, 1977 the present requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 208 concerning air bags & seat belts.

These requirements, providing the following 3 options, are presently due to expire Aug. 31:

1. Complete passive protection—such as an air bag—which automatically inflates in a crash & provides protection in frontal, lateral & roll-over crashes.
2. Head-on passive restraint system—again, such as an air bag—that protects the occupant in frontal crashes. This system is combined with lap seat belts to provide protection in lateral & roll-over crashes.
3. Lap & shoulder belts for 2 outside front positions & lap seat belts for all other positions.

[Note: The third option has been chosen by the vast majority of manufacturers. General Motors has offered a passive restraint system as an option on its luxury cars for 1974, 1975 & 1976, but does not intend to offer it in the future.]

DOT says that because of the controversy surrounding the whole air bag question, a decision will probably not be reached until after Jan. 1, 1977.

DOT is considering the following courses of action on air bags:

- Continuing the present 3 options described above.
- Continuing the present 3 options plus proposing to require states to adopt & enforce safety belt laws.
- Continuing present 3 options with Federal Government sponsoring a field test of air bags to see if they should be mandatory.
- Amending present 3 options to require air bags after a certain date.
- Amending present 3 options to require car makers to give customers the option of air bags in some models.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 14, page 24070. **CONSUMER REGISTER**: May 1, 1975; May 15, 1974; Feb. 15, 1974. Send comments to Secretary of Transportation, Washington, DC 20590. Identify as FMVSS 208.

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For you

These forms are for you to use, if you wish, in commenting on any Federal Agency proposal summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER. Of course, if you cannot get your comments on the front & back of a form, feel free to continue your comments on additional paper.

Send comment forms to addresses listed in the summaries.

CONSUMER NEWS is publishing these forms in cooperation with **Food & Drug Administration (FDA)**.

Rate Register

Trains

• **Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC)** has amended its train reservation regulations, effective June 21. From now on, the rail passenger carriers may cancel unpaid reservations sufficiently in advance of train departure to permit resale of space when it is unlikely that such space will be used. Before the new ruling, which is the result of a petition filed by **National Railroad Passenger Corp. (Amtrak)**, train companies had to hold unpaid reservations until 30 minutes before departure (for reservations made 0-7 days in advance).

Here is the schedule for unpaid reservations:

For reservations	Reservations shall be held at a minimum until—
0 to 2 days before departure	1 hour before departure
3 to 7 days before departure	48 hours before departure
8 to 21 days before departure	5 days before departure
22 to 45 days before departure	15 days before departure
Over 45 days before departure	30 days before departure

ICC is keeping its rule on paid reservations. Carriers may retain \$5 or 5% of the ticket price— whichever is greater—if paid reservations are not cancelled within 30 minutes of departure.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 21, page 24887.

Planes

• **Northwest Airlines** has joined most of the other air carriers in asking **Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB)** to

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Clip this form, fill in blanks, write your comments & mail to agency noted in CONSUMER REGISTER item.

This is my opinion on (title of item in CONSUMER REGISTER) _____

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Rate Register

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approve a 2% fare increase to become effective July 11. At CONSUMER NEWS' deadline, only Delta & National airlines have not asked for a similar increase. Also, regional carriers, such as Ozark, Piedmont & Southern airlines have not requested an increase.

■ Aug. 6 is deadline for comments on **Civil Aeronautics Board's** (CAB) proposal to require air carriers to publish & distribute easy-to-understand summaries of all their available fares, including restrictions on their use, if any. For example, if the proposal is adopted, the summary would tell a consumer that a certain fare is good on Monday through Thursday during the summer between Washington, DC & some points in Florida.

The proposed rule would apply to passenger fares for interstate & overseas air transportation furnished by certificated route carriers. Proposal is a result of a petition from Aviation Consumer Action Project (ACAP) & appeared as an advance notice of proposed rulemaking. Petition pointed out that the public "has no practicable way to determine all the options available to it for discretionary travel, since the official fare tariffs are unintelligible to the average layman, & travel agents & airline ticket-sales employees often do not present all the possible fare options . . ." [RATE REGISTER: July 1, 1975]

Details—*Federal Register*: June 22, page 25020. Send comments to Docket Section, Civil Aeronautics Board, Washington, DC 20428.

Buses

• On June 28, most intercity bus fares & express package rates went up 5%. These increases were approved by **Interstate Commerce Commission's** (ICC) Board of Suspensions, & do not include charters or commuter bus trips.

